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## Perceived sexualization in girls' fashion stylings: A Spain-China cross-cultural analysis

### Sexualización percibida en los estilismos de moda de niñas: Un análisis transcultural en España-China



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#### Abstract

Many institutions, social and political groups are warning of the risks associated with the early sexualization of childhood. These agents appeal to the responsibility of the media to avoid creating content that may lead to childhood sexualization and that is easily accessible to all audiences. Responding to this demand and through a cross-cultural Spain-China approach, this work focuses on the analysis of the perception of girls' sexualization in the fashion stylings disseminated by the media. A survey of 750 Communication and Advertising university students in Spain (N=449) and in China (N=301) was carried out. Five latent sexualization factors identified confirm that perceived sexualization in girls' fashion styling is a multi-dimensional phenomenon that occurs from the combined use of multiple sexualizing attributes. The country of origin (Spain or China) has been associated with the perception of sexualization and the identified latent sexualizing factors. Finally, an explanatory and highly effective predictive model has been obtained for this type of childhood sexualization in terms of the factors and country of origin. Conclusions suggest that it is necessary to reinforce the training of communication professionals and minors to avoid creating images of sexualized girls through certain styling codes.

#### Resumen

Numerosas instituciones, grupos sociales y políticos están alertando de los riesgos asociados a la temprana sexualización de la infancia. Estos agentes apelan a la responsabilidad de los medios para evitar la creación de contenidos que puedan derivar en sexualización infantil y que son fácilmente accesibles para todos los públicos. Respondiendo a esta llamada y con un enfoque transcultural España-China, este trabajo se centra en analizar la percepción de sexualización de las niñas en los estilismos de moda difundidos desde los medios. Se ha realizado una encuesta a 750 estudiantes universitarios de Comunicación y Publicidad en España (N=449) y en China (N=301). Se han identificado cinco factores de sexualización latentes que confirman que la sexualización percibida en los estilismos de moda de niñas es un fenómeno multidimensional que se produce por el uso combinado de múltiples atributos sexualizantes. Se ha corroborado que el país de origen (España o China) se asocia con la percepción de sexualización y de los factores latentes sexualizantes identificados. Finalmente, se ha obtenido un modelo explicativo y de elevada eficacia predictiva de la percepción de este tipo de sexualización infantil en términos de los factores y del país de origen. Se concluye que es necesario reforzar la formación de los profesionales de la comunicación y de los menores para evitar la creación de imágenes de niñas sexualizadas a través de determinados códigos estilísticos.

#### Keywords / Palabras clave

Childhood, sexualization, cross-cultural study, media literacy, advertising, fashion, sexism, media convergence. Infancia, sexualización, estudio transcultural, alfabetización mediática, publicidad, moda, sexismo, convergencia de medios.

## 1. Introduction and state of the art

The sexualization of women and girls is a global problem (Barzoki et al., 2017) that must be explored from different approaches and in all its dimensions (American Psychological Association, 2007).

In Spain, the growing concern about the increase of early sexualization of children (The Family Watch, 2018) has led to the approval of Proposition of Law No. (PNL for its initials in Spanish) 161/002716 on the necessary advancement of measures to combat the hypersexualization of children (Congress of Representatives of Spain, 2018). This regulation urges the Government, in cooperation with the Autonomous Communities, NGOs and other agents involved, to “convey to advertising and communication companies in our country the need to produce advertising content that respects gender equality and to avoid all sexist advertising” (Spanish Congress, 2018: 57) and to “promote measures to raise public awareness of the risk of early sexualization in children” (2018: 58). Therefore, it is necessary to make future professionals in advertising and commercial communication aware of the risks associated with child sexualization, and to provide them with tools and training to avoid the creation and dissemination of images of sexualized minors.

### 1.1. Child sexualization, media and mobile devices

This paper identifies sexualization as the act of being sexualized or sexualizing oneself (self-sexualization) to reduce an individual's physical attractiveness to being sexy, valuing someone based solely on their sexual attractiveness, or treating someone as a sexual object rather than a person. It also focuses on the sexualization that occurs through the media and the fashion industry, affecting girls. In this context, child sexualization involves imposing adult sexualization on children from the media (Starr, 2015).

The sexualizing imaginary is present in the commercial communication of multiple sectors and is spread through various media (Gunter, 2014; Daniels & Zurbruggen, 2016). In this media environment, it has been shown that magazines publish images portraying sexualized women and girls more frequently than content depicting sexualized men or boys (APA, 2007). This can influence adolescent girls to choose sexualizing clothes, hairstyles and makeup, or to adopt early sexual behavior (McCall, 2012). In this sense, fashion and lifestyle magazines are archetypical in their dissemination of images of highly sexualized individuals who represent the prototype of the ideal man or woman (Gunter, 2014; Speno & Aubrey, 2017).

However, today, content is no longer exclusive to certain media and platforms, since the Internet has enabled the same content to circulate through different media (Islas, 2009), while new technologies and advances in mobile devices have democratized access to such content (López-García et al., 2019) allowing audiences themselves to generate content and disseminate it with an unlimited reach (López-Cepeda et al., 2019).

In fact, the growing and widespread use of mobile devices with Internet access by children and adolescents (Mascheroni & Ólafsson, 2016) from increasingly younger ages (Kabali et al., 2015) allows them to access all kinds of content and to create and disseminate their own (Eleá & Mikos, 2017). Therefore, in the field of media literacy, it is important to educate children in the responsible production of media messages (García-Ruiz et al., 2014).

### 1.2. Sexualizing Attributes

Sexualizing attributes identified in the academic literature can be grouped into three categories: 1) Those related to people's dress codes and nudity; 2) Those related to the expressions and illustrations that sometimes appear alongside images of people or on the clothes they wear; 3) Those associated with people's gestures and postures.

Hatton and Trautner (2011: 256) conducted a content analysis of 1,006 “Rolling Stone” magazine covers published between 1967 and 2009. They used a scale with 11 variables to measure the intensity of sexualization of individuals appearing on those covers. The results revealed that “74% of the women were hypersexualized, showing not just one or two signs of sexualization, but a multitude of them”. Therefore, the authors speak of a cumulative effect of hypersexualization that occurs when multiple sexualizing attributes are combined: tight clothing, nudity, posture, erotically or sexually charged words, and objectifying imagery.

Smolak et al. (2014) concluded that sexualization among college youth is mainly related to clothing that highlights or reveals the body (tight pants or very short skirts and dresses) or emphasizes sexual areas of the body (e.g., padding for male or female underwear). Also, women's self-sexualization (Blake et al., 2016: 483) is often associated, among other things, with the use of “extremely sexualized clothing (e.g. visible underwear as a fashion trend)”.



With regard to children, Bailey (2011) points out as sexualizing elements the same ones that sexualize adults and that are reproduced in children's fashion products (animal prints, deep necklines, high-heeled shoes, clothes with slogans or illustrations with erotic meaning, etc.) and in the postures and gestures adopted by minors in commercial photographs and in fashion styles. In that context, Graff et al. (2013) developed a scale to measure how clothing, footwear and hairstyle sexualized or highlighted childlike aspects in girls featured in magazines.

### 1.3. Negative effects of child sexualization, responsible advertising and cultural values

Numerous studies warn of the negative consequences that the sexualization of minors can have on their cognitive, psychological and social development. Exposure to sexualized images has been shown to decrease children's cognitive abilities and to promote self-objectification and loss of self-esteem (Barzoki et al., 2017). Self-sexualization among adolescent and pre-adolescent girls (who internalize the belief that it is important to be sexually attractive) has also been shown to decrease their academic performance and their motivation to achieve (McKenney & Bigler, 2016). Girls who appear sexualized in different settings have been found to be perceived as less competent, intelligent, capable, determined, athletic, nice or friendly (Jongenelis et al., 2016; Díaz-Bustamante & Llovet-Rodríguez, 2017). In this regard, several authors (Zotos & Tsihla, 2014; Gunter, 2014) have pointed out that advertising, especially in fashion magazines, promotes gender stereotypes that can be harmful to women and girls.

Faced with this situation, it is necessary to appeal to the social responsibility of the media, to avoid the dissemination of images that sexualize children, and to the responsibility of advertisers, in order to avoid the creation of these images that are harmful to minors. Proof of this is PNL 161/002716 (Congress of Representatives of Spain, 2018: 57) which, pointing to sexist advertising as one of the causes of child hypertextualization, urges the Government to "Develop a regulation code for sexist advertising which tackles, defines and allows a clear evaluation of gender bias in commercial communication... Working with self-regulatory bodies in order to implement, disseminate and enforce this code. To convey to advertising and communication companies in our country the need to produce advertising content that respects gender equality and to avoid all sexist advertising". In line with this PNL, this work can help communication professionals to identify the specific elements whose insertion in children's commercial creations can lead to child sexualization. However, the sexual imagery used in different countries varies according to the cultural values and social norms prevailing in them (Mueller, 2010). Indeed, Nelson and Paek (2005) conclude that the intensity of sexual content published by the same magazine in different countries differs, among other things, according to the sexual freedom prevailing in each country.

Thus, it seems logical to think that the perception of child sexualization also varies according to the cultural values of different countries. Precisely, the concept "transcultural" implies the existence of the same concept or phenomenon in different countries or cultures, which can be interpreted differently in each of them due to their intrinsic characteristics (Welsch, 1999). Therefore, Duffy (2014) points out the need to carry out transcultural studies in the field of social sciences, since the meanings given to the concepts studied scientifically differ across the different cultures.

In this sense, we find it interesting to compare the perceptions of some images developed in the context of Western culture and values and in accordance with Western stylistic, beauty and sexuality canons, in two very different cultural environments: Spain (integrated into Western culture itself) and China (integrated into Eastern cultures). The differences between both environments are remarkable and diverse. Li (2019) points out that individualism prevails in the West while collectivism reigns in China. Sanz-Pérez and Rosso (2016) stress that creativity, in the West, is focused on innovation and breaking with tradition, while in the Chinese model it is seen as a way of imitating nature and contributing to social progress. Yaqing (2012) stresses that, in the West, the analysis of social reality is based on rationalism, while in China it is based on Confucianism. With regard to women's equality in society, data on the gender gap index place Spain in position 29 worldwide and China in position 103 (World Economic Forum, 2018). Therefore, with a cross-cultural Spain-China approach, the general objective of this work is to analyze the perception of girls' sexualization in fashion styles disseminated by the media. This main objective is divided into the following specific objectives: 1) To identify the latent sexualization factors in the fashion styles of girls disseminated through the media; 2) To analyze if there are differences between Spain and China regarding the perception of girls' sexualization and the latent factors that sexualize them in fashion stylings; 3) To develop an explanatory and predictive model of the perception of girls' sexualization in fashion stylings from the latent sexualization factors found in them and from the audience's country of origin (Spain or China).

## 2. Methodology

The research carried out follows a descriptive and causal approach, based on a non-experimental cross-sectional analytical design.

### 2.1. Participants

An Internet survey was administered to 750 Communication and Advertising university students in Spain (N=449) and in China (N=301). The sample of students in Spain was comprised of 61.7% women and 38.3% men, with an average age of 22 years (SD=1.5 years). The sample of students in China consists of 64.9% women and 30.6% men, with an average age of 22 years (SD=1.7 years).

Quota sampling was conducted with students of two of the authors: one, a university professor in Madrid teaching various degrees related to Communication and Advertising; the other, a two-year university professor in Beijing teaching in the "Bachelor of Arts in Advertising and Public Relations" ("New York Institute of Technology-Beijing Campus").

The distribution of the sample by country has considered that the proportion of university students (Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities of the Spanish Government, 2017-2018) in the population residing in Spain (National Institute of Statistics, 2018) is 40% higher than that of China (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2018). The gender distribution was established on the basis of the available data on students of Advertising and Marketing in Spain (as no gender-based data on university students are available in China). According to these data, 63.1% of Advertising and Marketing students in Spain, in the period 2017-18, were women, and the remaining 36.9% were men (Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities of the Spanish Government, 2017-18).

### 2.2. Instruments

A structured "ad hoc" questionnaire was used to obtain information on the personal characteristics of the respondents (gender, age and country of origin), the perceived sexualization of girls in fashion magazine styles and the perceived sexualizing power of the attributes in these images.

Four images of girls' stylings (all under 12 years old, three with Western features and one with Eastern features) published in fashion magazines were chosen to illustrate different levels of sexualization (from very high to very low) according to the number of sexualizing attributes appearing in them. The attributes considered for these were those identified and validated by Hatton and Trautner (2011), Graff et al. (2013) and Smolak et al. (2014).

The first image selected was published in the "Cadeaux" editorial of "Vogue Paris" no. 913 (Bellver, 2011), described in academic literature as a "paradigm of highly sexualized girls" (Gunter, 2014: 86; Moloney & Pelehach, 2013: 123), which generated a strong debate in public opinion around the world for showing hypersexualized girls (Bellver, 2011), with wide online dissemination of the image selected in this study. This image shows a girl with 18 of the sexualizing attributes considered in the study.

Subsequently, images showing girls with fewer sexualizing attributes were sought to illustrate proportionally lower levels of sexualization: with 12, 6, and less than 6 sexualizing attributes. Thus, the second and third images, published in "Telva Niños" No. 17 (Telva, 2014), each show a girl with 12 and 6 sexualizing attributes respectively. The fourth image chosen, published in "Hola Especial Niños" n° 3658 (Hola, 2014), shows a girl with four sexualizing attributes. Once the four chosen images were shown, the participants were asked about the perceived sexualization (1=None, 2=Slight, 3=Moderate and 4=High) in each of them.

To measure the perceived sexualizing power of the elements or attributes exhibited by girls in the stylings of fashion magazines, a scale with 35 items was used ( $\alpha$  by Cronbach = 0.95) whose sexualizing power was also measured with the scale: 1=None, 2=Slight, 3=Moderate and 4=High. The scale's items are also based on the sexualizing attributes used by Hatton and Trautner (2011), Graff et al. (2013) and Smolak et al. (2014)

Before administering the survey via the Internet, the questionnaire was given to a small group of students (15 in Spain and 15 in China) to verify the correct understanding of the questionnaire and its items.

### 2.3. Procedure

In the participant selection process, each individual (identified by their ID card or passport number) was asked for express authorization to participate in the study and to receive the link to the survey website by e-mail. They also provided their authorized e-mail address and their data concerning their university studies, gender



and age. After compiling the list of participants, the link to the survey website was sent to each participant's authorized e-mail address.

## 2.4. Data analysis

The statistical analysis of the data was carried out with the SPSS v25 program. Starting from the basic univariate and bivariate descriptive statistics, other more complex inferential and multivariate statistical analyses were performed. Thus, the following techniques were applied, which will be detailed in the results section: principal component analysis, analysis of variance (ANOVA), Mann-Whitney U test, Chi-square test, discriminant analysis and Huberty test.

## 3. Results

This section presents the findings obtained from the specific objectives set out in this study.

### 3.1. Latent sexualization factors in girls' fashion styles reported in the media

To identify latent sexualization factors from the 35 originally tested attributes displayed by girls in fashion styles, a Varimax Rotation Principal Component Analysis was performed. In this analysis, those attributes that showed, after extraction, values lower than 0.4 in the matrix of communalities and significant factor loads in several components were removed from the initial scale.

Table 1 shows that the 22 final sexualizing attributes selected are reduced to five clearly defined latent factors of similar importance, which together explain 61.98% of the total variance contained in the original data.

**Table 1. Latent factors that sexualize girls in fashion stylings**

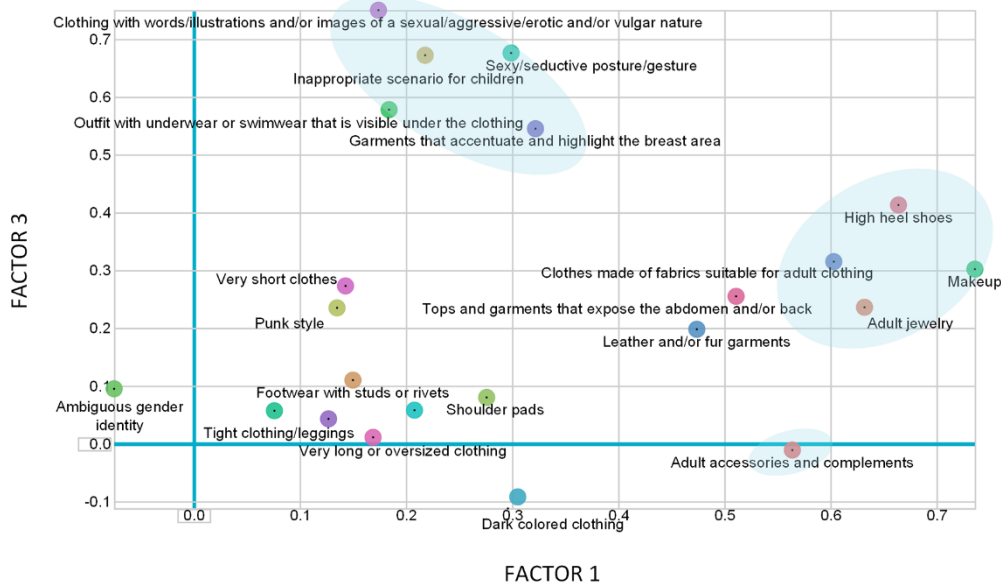
Factor	Factor interpretation	% of variance explained total	Sexualizing attributes that are included in every factor
F1	Eroticizing accessories	14.43%	Makeup
			High heel shoes
			Adult jewelry (e.g. long necklaces, chokers, oversized earrings...)
			Clothes made of fabrics suitable for adult clothing (e.g. lingerie, silk, velvet...)
			Adult accessories and complements (belts, handbags, glasses)
F2	Adult clothing	14.03%	Combination of summer and winter clothes and accessories
			Ambiguous gender identity
			Very long or oversized clothing
			Dark colored clothing (black, grey...)
			Shoulder pads
F3	Sexual symbolism	12.74%	Clothing with words/illustrations and/or images of a sexual/aggressive/erotic and/or vulgar nature
			Sexy/seductive posture/gesture
			Inappropriate scenario for children (creepy, gruesome... e.g. a girl in a public men's room)
			Outfit with underwear or swimwear that is visible under the clothing
			Garments that accentuate and highlight the breast area
F4	Punk Styling	10.62%	Footwear with studs or rivets
			Clothing with studs or rivets
			Punk style
			Leather and/or fur garments (e.g. black or red leather)
F5	Body exposure	10.13%	Very short clothes (skirts, dresses, shorts...)
			Tight clothing, "leggings"
			Tops and garments that expose the abdomen and/or back

Note. Factor Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser standardization. The rotation converged in 12 iterations. Barlett's sphericity test = 7081.27,  $p = 0.000$ . Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Index = 0.948.

Factor 1 (F1), called “Eroticizing accessories” (Table 1; Figure 1), is defined mainly by the attributes related to the accessories usually worn by adult women to increase their erotic attractiveness or power of attraction through them.

Factor 2 (F2), called “Adult clothing” (Table 1; Figure 3), is defined mainly by attributes related to stylistic codes worn by adults, but without any erotic connotation.

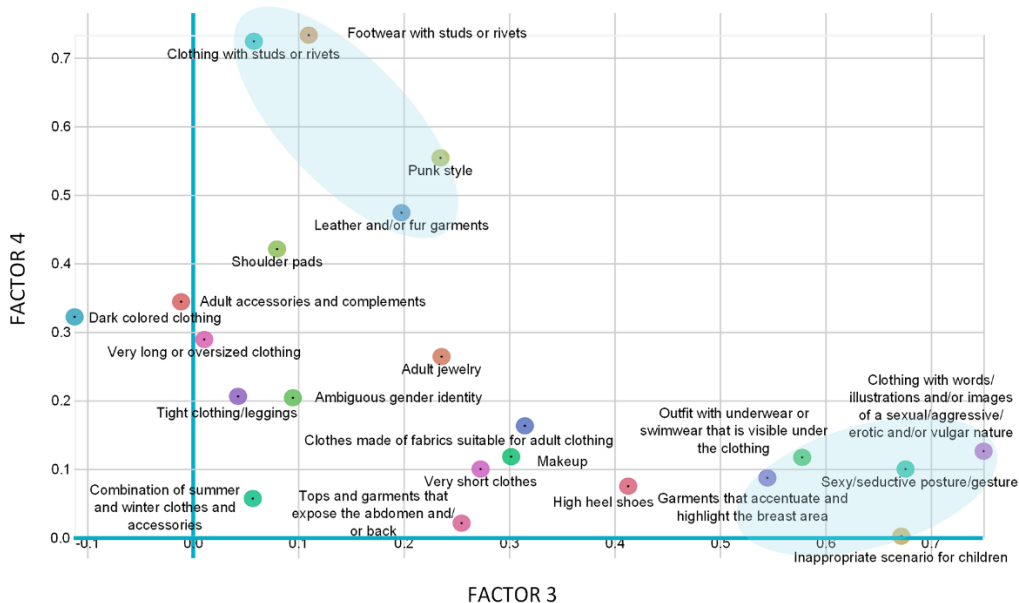
Figure 1. Graphic representation of factors 1 and 3



Factor 3 (F3), called “Sexual Symbolism” (Table 1; Figure 2), is defined by attributes related to clothing that highlights the breasts and environmental elements, postures, words or illustrations with sexual meanings.

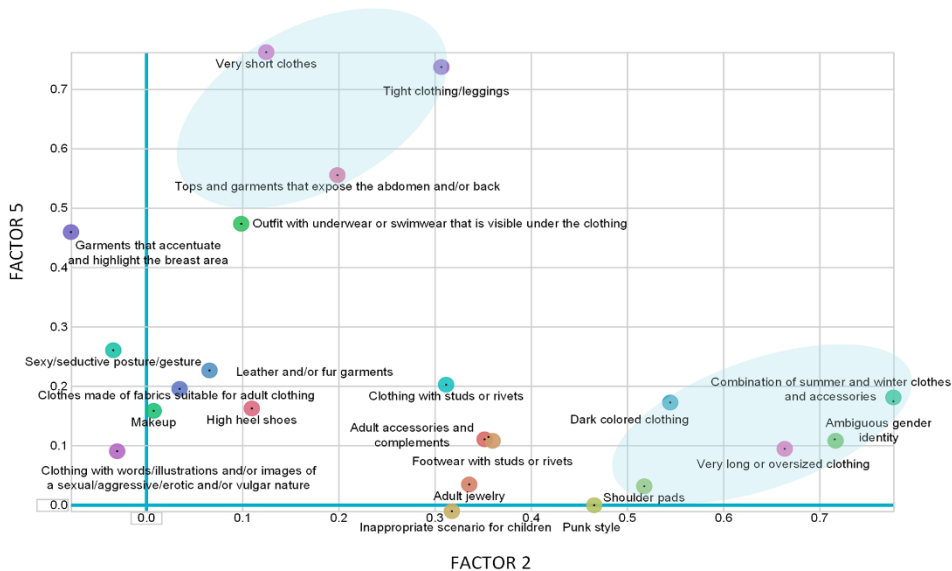
Factor 4 (F4), called “Punk Styling” (Table 1; Figure 2), is defined by attributes related to punk style clothing and accessories.

Figure 2. Graphic representation of factors 3 and 4



Factor 5 (F5), called “Body exposure” (Table 1; Figure 3), is defined by attributes associated with the display of naked body parts or garments that highlight body shapes.

Figure 3. Graphic representation of factors 2 and 5



### 3.2. Differences between Spain and China in the perception of girls' sexualization and sexualizing factors

After extracting the perceived latent sexualization factors, the authors compared whether there were statistically significant differences in them according to the respondents' country of origin (China or Spain). As the factorial scores for the five factors are used as the starting point, the homogeneity of the variance of each factor in the comparison groups has been checked (test required in the parametric contrasts). The analysis of variance (ANOVA) was then performed, verifying the absence of heteroscedasticity and calculating the contrast statistic F. In the case of non-homogeneous variances, nonparametric contrast testing was performed with the Mann-Whitney U test. Figure 4 illustrates the existence of significant differences in the perceived sexualization factors according to the country of origin of those studied. The Spanish subjects considered factors 1, 3 and 5 to be more sexual, while the Chinese subjects opted for factors 2 “Adult Clothing” and 4 “Punk Styling”. Although the differences in factor 5 “Body exposure” are not statistically significant, they are close to it ( $p=0.000$  in all the statistical tests performed for the different factors except for factor 5 with  $p=0.058$ ).

Figure 4. Centroids of sexualizing factor scores by country





With regard to the perceived sexualization in the images tested, the results obtained show that Image 1 - published in the "Cadeaux" editorial of "Vogue Paris" no. 913 (Bellver, 2011) - is considered as being sexualized by the majority of those surveyed (59.7%) as opposed to images 2, 3 and 4 which they are only perceived as being sexualized by 12.7%, 8.7% and 8.3% respectively.

Thus, focusing the analysis on Image 1, we observe that the perception of sexualization for this image differs significantly between Chinese and Spanish subjects (Chi-Square=13.137;  $p=0.000$ ), in such a way that the sexualized perception is associated with Spanish nationality, and the absence of sexualized perception is associated with Chinese nationality.

### 3.3. Explanatory and predictive model of girls' perception of sexualization in fashion stylings

In order to provide a model to explain and predict the perception of girls' sexualization in fashion stylings from the identified sexualization factors and the audience's country of origin, a discriminating analysis has been conducted using the stepwise method. The results of this analysis show, for the joint model of both countries, the following significant discriminant function (Chi-Square=191.133;  $p=0.000$ ) with Wilks' Lambda=0.723:

$$\text{Perceived sexualization} = 2.061 - 1.419 \text{ Country of origin} + 0.454 \text{ F1} + 0.406 \text{ F3} + 0.366 \text{ F5} + 0.203 \text{ F2}$$

The study of the standardized coefficients reveals that the most important independent variable for predicting the perception of sexualization is the audience's country of origin, followed by the factors 1) "Eroticizing accessories"; 3) "Sexual symbolism"; 5) "Body exposure"; 2) "Adult clothing", respectively.

Most of the independent variables (with positive signs) are positively associated with the perception of the image tested as sexualized. The only variable with a negative sign is the audience's country of origin, which means that the Chinese origin of participants predicts less perceived sexualization.

Finally, to validate the previous model, the sample has been divided into two groups: training sample (595 cases; 79.3% of the total) and test sample (155 cases; 20.7% of the total), in both, the selection of the individuals was performed through a random procedure. In addition, the cross-validation method was used, leaving one case out of the training sample.

The overall classification results obtained in the training sample are 73.1% of correctly classified cases. By groups, for the training sample that enabled the generation of the model, the percentage of accuracy for the group of individuals who perceive sexualization is 72.3%. In the cross-validation model, the overall percentage of accuracy is 72.3%, and for the group of subjects who have perceived sexualization, 72% is correctly predicted. Finally, in the test sample (155 cases; 20.7% of the total), more satisfactory results were obtained, with 83.9% overall hits and 87.6% hits for the group of subjects who perceived sexualization. In all cases, it was found that the overall percentage of hits was statistically significant and higher than the classification expected solely by chance (Huberty test;  $Z > 1.96$ ,  $p = 0.005$ ), which suggests that the model has a high level of predictive effectiveness (Huberty, 1984).

## 4. Discussion and conclusions

In terms of the first objective, this study found five latent factors of girls' sexualization in fashion styles published in magazines. Thus, it has been proven, for the first time, that this type of sexualization is not only related to revealing girls' bodies or to the make-up, clothes and accessories they wear, as other authors have already pointed out (Graff et al., 2013; Smolak et al., 2014), but it is also highly determined by the gestures and postures they adopt, by the scenario surrounding them and by the words or illustrations they display on the clothes or accessories they wear. This contribution confirms that: 1) The attributes of adult women's sexualization identified in the academic literature equally sexualize girls when they use them; 2) The sexualization of girls, like that of adults, is a multidimensional phenomenon produced by the joint interplay of multiple sexualizing attributes.

As for the second objective, this work shows that cultural differences, associated with the audience's country of origin of a medium that disseminates children's fashion styles, significantly condition the perception or lack thereof girls' sexualization shown in that medium. Likewise, the country of origin influences whether or not the attributes used in these styles -and therefore the latent factors resulting from them- are considered to be sexualizing for girls. This result is in line with Nelson and Paek (2005) when they point out that the cultural values and political-economic systems of different countries determine the intensity of the sexual content published by the same medium in each of these countries. In this sense, we could conclude that Chinese



subjects are less sensitive to the Western sexualizing codes used in the stylings analyzed or confer upon them a less sexualizing meaning.

In relation to the third objective, this work defines, for the first time, an explanatory and predictive model of girls' sexualization present in fashion styles, on the basis of the latent factors of sexualization present in those styles and the country of origin (Spain or China) of the viewer. In addition to their academic value, the contributions of this study have an eminently practical value to combat child sexualization produced and disseminated by the media. From this approach, the latent factors of sexualization identified are associated with the use of some very specific attributes when creating a fashion style for girls. Advertising creatives, fashion stylists and media outlets themselves can avoid creating and disseminating content that is harmful to children by being aware of the effect, in terms of sexualization, of incorporating these elements in the content they are creating, depending on the country where it is distributed.

However, the usefulness of this model is conditioned by the very willingness of communication professionals to combat child sexualization.

In this sense, we recommend that they be made aware of the phenomenon and the harmful effects it has on minors, especially through deontological training already provided by many universities and schools for future communication professionals (Martín-Llaguno & Hernández-Ruiz, 2010). We also recommend that this training be extended to the minors themselves and to other social groups that generate content and disseminate it through new technologies (Eleá & Mikos, 2017; López-Cepeda et al., 2019). In particular, within the scope of media literacy for minors in the field in question, and following the guidelines set out by García-Ruiz et al. (2014), we recommend training focused on the damage that minors themselves can cause through the dissemination of sexualized images of themselves or other children, and on how to avoid creating such images. In terms of limitations, it should be noted that the conclusions of this work are valid in relation to the researched population: university students of Communication and Advertising in Spain and China. Without a doubt, this is a group of special interest considering the object of study, since it incorporates future professionals responsible for the design and dissemination of media messages. However, it would be useful to analyze whether other audiences exhibit the same sensibility to girls who are sexualized in fashion styles and to the attributes of sexualization used in those styles. In this regard, it is worth asking whether other personal or intrinsic household characteristics (such as having children or the type of parental education) may affect the perception of childhood sexualization. It would also be appropriate to broaden the geographical analysis to consider other cultures that may also influence that perception.

Other possible studies could focus on analyzing possible gender differences in the perception of the phenomenon studied, and on identifying and delving deeper (with qualitative methodology) into the specific cultural factors that explain the differences in perception between China and Spain. Finally, we consider it essential to explore the phenomenon of child sexualization (of girls and boys) in other commercial communications not linked to fashion and in all types of audiovisual products (such as video games, films, television series, cartoons, etc.).

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